Service First Initiative

1) THE SILOS AND WALLS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED IN THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PERMITTING PROCESS NEED TO BE ELIMINATED

Project: Development Review Team   **Implementation Date: October 2008**

Establish a cross-departmental Development Review Team (DRT) who can review development applications at key milestones throughout the review process to provide clear guidance and direction on potential project issues. The DRT will improve interdepartmental and interdivisional coordination, and break down silos and walls between the departments involved in the land development permitting process. Benefits of the DRT include a greater staff understanding of projects and reduce later process problems, resulting in improved process timelines and decision making.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
3.1	Institute a Development Review Team to review appropriate large discretionary projects, and smaller ones when warranted or requested by applicant.	Oct '08	X
3.2	Empower members of the Development Review Team with authority to solve development issues and make commitments for their respective departments.	Oct '08	X
3.5	Have experienced on-the-spot decision makers from appropriate disciplines in attendance at the DRT at all times	Oct '08	X
5.2	Establish project management teams consisting, at a minimum, of Planning, engineering and legal counsel via the DRT.	Oct '08	X

2) DELIVERING A HIGH QUALITY AND HIGHLY CONSISTENT WORK PRODUCT REQUIRES AN ONGOING, CONTINUAL REASSESSMENT OF REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Project: Improve the Pre-Application Process   **Implementation Date: October 2008**

Improve the pre-application process through the use of standard procedures and protocol between all Departments. Document process by using standard worksheets, forms, and standard response letter to applicant. Meet with the Development Review Team (DRT) prior to the pre-application meeting with the applicant. Establish comprehensive research program for use by all departments prior to meeting with the DRT and applicant. Benefits of the improved pre-application process include identifying major issues early in the process to create a more comprehensive approach to identifying major project issues and informing applicants about what they will need to do during the permit process.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
3.4	Improve the quality of the pre-application conferences and reinforce mandatory attendance for key staff from DPLU and other departments.	Oct '08	X
5.3	Provide management direction and performance tools to ensure that pre-application meetings are productive.	Oct '08	X

Project: Additional Recommendations   **Implementation Date: October 2008**

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
4.3	Eliminate further multiple "bites at the apple" during the development review permitting process.	Oct '08	X
4.1	Ensure ongoing code updates, continue the POD program; if needed, expand the POD program in the future.	Oct '08	X

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3) CUSTOMER SERVICE MUST BE THE TOP PRIORITY IN THE NEW ORGANIZATION

Project: Develop a comprehensive customer service program — Implementation Date: April 2009

Establish a comprehensive and strategic customer service program that meets the needs of our customers and stakeholders while ensureing high quality work. Providing highly effective customer service must be a core discipline of every employee and manager. A comprehensive customer service program will address customer priorities, focus on creative "end game" solutions, include ongoing training and ensure customers are receiving the appropriate service levels by measuring feedback and satisfaction.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
1.10	Establish on-going customer service training.	Mar '09	
1.11	Institute an "Unanticipated Service" program.	Mar '09	
8.4	Create a customer perspective training program for DPLU and DPW staff.	Mar '09	
4.4	Have DPLU provide direct contracts for the preparation of EIR's and Negative Declarations as an option for customers	Apr '09	
1.9	Appoint an editor to review the array of techical documents distributed to the public, to ensure user friendliness and clarity of purpose	Jan ' 09	
1.12	Develop a LUEG-wide sense of urgency and timeliness of development processes; encourage, support, and promote staff that embrace the philosophy	Mar '09	

Project: Enhance online services to increase customer options — Implementation Date: April 2009

Online and web-based services should align with customer needs. Improved service will be achieved by providing enhanced online services including more online permits, online appointments online and display real time wait times. Pursuit of additional online services will improve the quality and efficiency of the work product as well as meet the needs of the customer. tracking customer and industry trends will ensure the County continues to meet customer needs by providing a variety of options and choices for service.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
1.3	Display real-time wait times on the web to help customers self-select when to come down to the permit center.	Apr '09	
1.4	Establish an online document/plan submittal process	Jul '10	
1.7	Provide an online appointment system for the counter services involved in land development	Oct '09	
7.2	Upgrade the web site to allow point-of-sale on small permits	Oct '09	

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4) THE COUNTY NEEDS TO ORGANIZE AROUND THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PERMITTING PROCESS, RATHER THAN WITHIN ITS HISTORICAL STRUCTURE

Project: Co-location of Staff involved in Land Development Process

Co-locate those teams involved in the land development process that have significant overlap and frequent, regular coordination needs. Combine those teams in the land development process that are critical to establishing a seamless land development process for the customer. The benefits of co-location and merging of work groups will establish a single land development process such that the customer feels they are working with one agency, rather than multiple departments. The Department of Planning and Land Use will function as lead for land development services and coordinate with other departments such as Department of Public Works, Department of Environmental Health and Department of Parks and Recreation. Merging and co-locating these functions will improve efficiencies, reduce redundancies and improve economies of scale.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
9.1	Bring in team member(s) from the County Counsel's office for co-location to support to DPLU & DPW functions on-site at Ruffin Road.	Oct '08	X
3.3	Increase the amount of time that team member(s) from the County Counsel's office are co-located to be on-site at the Ruffin Road site	Dec '08	
10.3	Combine DPLU Watershed and DPW Watershed teams so that both teams operate within DPW Watershed.	Nov '08	X
10.1	Combine counter staff from DPW with DPLU to create a seemless land development permit counter process and improve service delivery	Nov '08	X
10.2	Co-locate the Transportation Planning and Traffic Engineering Plan Review groups from DPW with DPLU to better coordinate the development review permitting process. Co-locate DPW Land Development with DPLU to improve the land development and development services functions.	Nov '08	X

Project: Organizational Changes

Ensure that organizational structure and positions are based on a customer centric approach rather than traditional silos.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
3.7	Move the developer deposit function to the Support Services team in order to maintain greater fiscal control.	Oct '08	X
10.4	Change the Chief of Administration position to a Deputy Director for Administration.	Oct '08	X
10.5	Have the Support Services Division and the Personnel Division be led by the Deputy Director of Administration	Oct '08	X
10.6	Change the Deputy Director/Development Services position to an Assistant Director	Jan '09	
10.7	Add a program manager type position to deal with special projects and the day-to-day customer complaints and concerns.	Oct '08	X
10.8	Add a new Communications Manager.	Oct '08	X
10.9	Appoint a visionary leader for the County's Advanced Planning program.	Oct '08	X
10.10	Plan for the new facility to be built in the next 5 years around the development application communication flow.	Feb '09	
8.9	Establish a reliable exit interview process to identify actual, as opposed to anecdotal, evidence of factors that contribute to turnover.	Feb '09	

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5) PROJECT MANAGEMENT MUST BE CUSTOMER ORIENTED; SUCH THAT EMPHASIS BE PLACED UPON DELIVERING DESIRABLE OUTCOMES FOR THE COUNTY, ITS CUSTOMERS & STAKEHOLDERS.

Project: Single Case Project Manager and File

Assign a single project manager to all discretionary projects. The project manager needs to be responsible for all aspects of the project. The project should be consolidated into one file (one hard copy and one e-file) for the project and not separate case files for each department. One single project manager in the Department of Planning and Land Use will serve as the project manager. Other departments involved in the land development process will serve as support to the lead project manager.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
1.8	Assign project managers to project applications early in the process and have them remain as the customer's "go-to person" on all aspects of the project through completion.	Dec '08	
5.1	Maintain a single case project manager for the life of the project.	Dec '08	
7.1	Aggressively scan and convert files to electronic form to support single file management system	Oct '09	
4.2	Designate one staff person, and a designated back-up, to manage all sign-offs for the final approval of a project	Apr '09	
4.5	Institute a more flexible and collaborative problem-solving approach to the County's CEQA review of EIR's and Negative Declarations	Feb '09	

Project: Empower Staff and Reward Performance

Empower staff at appropriate levels to make decisions and resolve issues at project level. The benefits of empowering staff result in fewer decisions requiring approval of multiple levels of management, creating a more streamlined process of decision making and shorter processing times for projects.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
3.6	Empower and reward those employees who demonstrate results across divisional and departmental lines.	Mar '09	
6.5	Measure and reward performance that reinforces the County's/Department's goals and vision.	Mar '09	
8.7	Empower appropriate, experienced staff to use the written procedures as guidance rather than as a rote cookbook	Apr '09	

Project: Permit Counter Redesign

Redesign the permit counter services to improve efficiencies, offer customers more options and be more customer centric.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
1.5	Eliminate the "hand-carry by applicant" permit system and replace it with an internal routing system.	Oct '09	
1.6	Create a Permit Center express drop-off service.	Oct '09	
10.11	Design the new permit center with customer service and the permit process in mind.	Oct '09	

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6) MAKE A SERIOUS COMMITMENT TO ONGOING TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT CHANGE

Project: Training Initiatives

Establish training programs identified in the Report. Ensure trianing programs are designed to meet needs of staff and customers.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
8.6	Establish a team-building program to support all staff, especially the staff affected by any recommended organizational changes set forth in this report.	Mar '09	
8.1	Establish a focused and ongoing mentoring program, as well as training programs in management, professional development and project management.	Feb '09	
8.2	Conduct a training needs assessment for the Department that includes professional development expectations for each staff person.	Mar '09	
8.3	Provide for and support training in the technical job knowledge and skills to remain up to date.	Jun '09	
8.5	Develop a multi-year rotation program for planners.	Oct '09	
6.6	Reduce Planning Manager caseload, including resolution of inactive projects so they can mentor, coach, and supervise front line personnel	Mar '09	

7) PERFORMANCE MEASURES SHOULD ADDRESS A BROADER SET OF MORE QUALITATIVE FACTORS

Project: Enhance Performance Measurement System

Enhance performance measures to track similar data for DPLU and DPW. Expand performance measures to capture qulitative outcomes, customer contact, customer service.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
4.7	Time spent communicating with applicants, whether in a meeting or by telephone, needs to be an accepted time activity that is measured as productive time	Dec '08	X
5.4	Revise the workload measurement system to place more value on needed meetings with applicants, including pre-application and issue-resolution meetings.	Jan '09	
6.1	Reevaluate the activity tracking and measuring system to measure more outcomes.	Jan '09	
6.2	Revise the measurement system to place value on needed meetings with applicants, including pre-application meetings and issue-resolution meetings.	Jan '09	
6.4	Hold employees accountable to cross-departmental cycle time standards.	Mar '09	
5.5	Institute performance measures that relate to customer satisfaction issues, specifically including timeliness and completeness on the initial review.	Jan '09	
6.3	Institute additional performance measures in order to capture qualitative customer satisfaction issues.	Jan '09	

8) EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PLACED ON INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE COUNTY AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITH CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Project: Communication of Mission, Goals, Values, Policies and Procedures

Create a mission statement that represents the department(s) values/goals/objectives. Formulize a plan and implement a process to communicate to our internal staff and external customers our mission as well as our good news stories utilizing the web, graphics, etc. Place value on communication with customers and stakeholders.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
9.2	Prepare and distribute up-to-date mission/goals/values statements.	Jan '09	
9.3	Identify and create effective communication tools to distribute important information about the Department and its processes.	Nov '08	X
9.4	Put a large organization chart in a prominent place that both staff and customers can view.	Nov '08	X
9.5	Increase outreach and coordination with community groups such as planning and sponsor groups	Dec '08	X

9) CONTINUE TO INVEST IN AND TRAIN FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES THAT WILL IMPROVE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF SERVICES PROVIDED

Project: Accela and Information Systems

Improving current project status and account status availability and overall permitting system performance through implementation of new technologies that will enhance County services and meet customer needs. Improvements will include greater transparancy of project status, accounts and schedule.

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
7.3	Continue to aggressively pursue Accela implementation.	Jul '10	
4.6	Improve real-time systems for developer accounts; eliminate deficit spending.	Apr '09	
7.4	Provide project status and projected timeline through the web site.	Oct '08	X
8.8	Provide the support systems necessary for excellent performance—accounting, technology, training, etc.	Apr '09	
1.13	Improve the timeliness and accuracy of the accounting software program; provide secure Current Account Status online for DPLU customers.	Apr '09	
7.5	Create an electronic sign off process for final applications	Oct '09	

10) RECOMMENDATIONS STILL UNDER REVIEW

Implementation Date: TBD

Recommendations:		Timeline	Complete
1.1	When financially feasible, re-open the satellite service centers.	TBD	
1.2	Increase the cost of permit fees in order to adequately fund the customer service function and maintain reasonable wait times. Maintain these fees at an adequate level by annual indexing and frequent review.	TBD	
8.10	Conduct a compensation study and resolve any compaction issue between Chiefs and Planning Managers that may or may not exist.	TBD	